Please add the following new claims --

52. A method for treating an intervertebral disc comprising:

delivering an introducer into or adjacent to an intervertebral disc;

extending a guide wire from a distal end of the introducer such that the guide wire is positioned within the intervertebral disc;

attaching a distal portion of the guide wire to an inner wall of the disc ; and

advancing a probe along the guide wire such that the probe follows a path of the guide wire within the intervertebral disc.

53. A method according to claim 52 wherein attaching the guide wire to the inner wall of the disc comprises inserting a distal portion of the guide wire into the inner wall.

54. A method according to claim 53 wherein inserting comprises hooking a distal portion of the guide wire into the inner wall.

55. A method according to claim 53 wherein the distal portion of the guide wire comprises an retractable hook, the method further comprising hooking the retractable hook into the inner wall.

56. A method according to claim 53 wherein the distal portion of the guide wire comprises multiple hooks, the method further comprising hooking the multiple hooks into the inner wall.

57. A method according to claim 52 wherein extending the guide wire is accomplished by applying a longitudinal force to the guide wire which is sufficient to advance the guide wire through the nucleus pulposus and around the inner wall of an annulus fibrosus, but which force is insufficient for guide wire to puncture the annulus fibrosus.

58. A method according to claim 52 wherein the probe includes a functional element for performing a function, the method further including performing a function after the probe is advanced.

59. A method according to claim 52 wherein the probe includes an electromagnetic energy delivery device, the method further including delivering electromagnetic energy from the electromagnetic energy delivery device after the probe is advanced.

60. A method according to claim 59 wherein the electromagnetic energy delivered is selected from group consisting of coherent and incoherent light, radiofrequency, microwave, and ultrasound waves.

61. A method according to claim 59 wherein the electromagnetic energy delivery device comprises electrodes adapted to deliver RF energy.

62. A method according to claim 61 wherein the RF electrodes have a monopolar configuration.

63. A method according to claim 61 wherein the RF electrodes have a bipolar configuration.

64. A method according to claim 59 wherein the electromagnetic energy device comprises a resistive heating mechanism.

65. A method according to claim 52 wherein extending the guide wire is performed using a handle external to the person which comprises a guide wire control element for controlling the movement of the guide wire within the intervertebral disc.

66. A method according to claim 61 wherein the RF electrodes comprise a plurality of alternating one or more active and return electrodes which are positioned on the probe such that there are multiple pairs of an active band and a return band of the active and return electrodes adjacent each other.

67. A method according to claim 52 wherein the probe includes a lumen, the method further including delivering or aspirating material in the disc via the lumen.